




## Why walk?

Walking is one of the easiest ways to be physically active. You can do it almost anywhere and at any time. Walking is also inexpensive. All you need is a pair of shoes with sturdy heel support. Walking will:

- *Give you more energy*
- *Make you feel good*
- *Help you to relax*
- *Reduce stress*
- *Help you sleep better*
- *Tone your muscles*
- *Help control your appetite*
- *Increase the number of calories your body uses.*

For all these reasons, people have started walking programs. If you would like to start your own program, read and follow the information provided in this pamphlet.




## Is it okay for me to walk?

Answer the following questions before you begin a walking program.

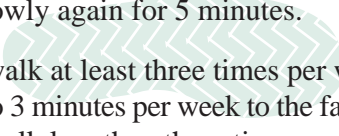
- Has your health care provider ever told you that you have heart trouble?
- When you are physically active, do you have pains in your chest or on your left side (neck, shoulder, or arm)?
- Do you often feel faint or have dizzy spells?
- Do you feel extremely breathless after you have been physically active?
- Has your health care provider told you that you have high blood pressure?
- Has your health care provider told you that you have bone or joint problems, like arthritis, that could get worse if you are physically active?
- Are you over 50 years old and not used to a lot of physical activity?
- Do you have a health problem or physical reason not mentioned here that might keep you from starting a walking program?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, please check with your health care provider before starting a walking program or other form of physical activity.



## How do I start a walking program?


Leave time in your busy schedule to follow a walking program that will work for you. In planning your walking program, keep the following points in mind:

- Choose a safe place to walk. Find a partner or group of people to walk with you. Your walking partner(s) should be able to walk with you on the same schedule and at the same speed.
  - Wear shoes with thick flexible soles that will cushion your feet and absorb shock.
  - Wear clothes that will keep you dry and comfortable. Look for synthetic fabrics that absorb sweat and remove it from your skin.
  - For extra warmth in winter, wear a knit cap. To stay cool in summer, wear a baseball cap or visor.
  - Do light stretching before and after you walk.
  - Think of your walk in three parts. Walk slowly for 5 minutes. Increase your speed for the next 5 minutes. Finally, to cool down, walk slowly again for 5 minutes.
  - Try to walk at least three times per week. Add 2 to 3 minutes per week to the fast walk. If you walk less than three times per week, increase the fast walk more slowly.
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- To avoid stiff or sore muscles or joints, start gradually. Over several weeks, begin walking faster, going further, and walking for longer periods of time.
- The more you walk, the better you will feel. You also will use more calories.

A sample walking program and examples of easy stretches are shown on the back.

## Safety tips

- Keep safety in mind when you plan your route and the time of your walk.
  - Walk in the daytime or at night in well-lighted areas.
  - Walk in a group at all times.
  - Notify your local police station of your group's walking time and route.
  - Do not wear jewelry.
  - Do not wear headphones.
  - Be aware of your surroundings.
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# How do I warm up?

Before you start to walk, do the stretches shown here. Remember not to bounce when you stretch. Perform slow movements and stretch only as far as you feel comfortable.

## Side Reaches



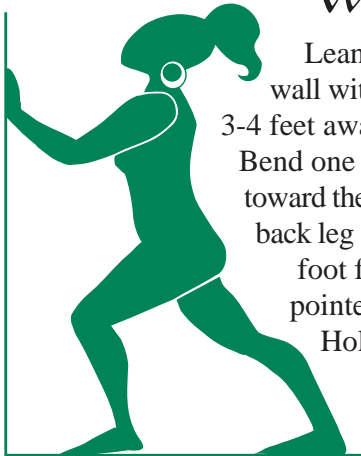
Reach one arm over your head and to the side. Keep your hips steady and your shoulders straight to the side. Hold for 10 seconds and repeat on the other side.

## Knee Pull



Lean your back against a wall. Keep your head, hips, and feet in a straight line. Pull one knee to your chest, hold for 10 seconds, then repeat with the other leg.

## Wall Push



Lean your hands on a wall with your feet about 3-4 feet away from the wall. Bend one knee and point it toward the wall. Keep your back leg straight with your foot flat and your toes pointed straight ahead. Hold for 10 seconds and repeat with the other leg.

## Leg Curl



Pull your right foot to your buttocks with your right hand. Keep your knee pointing straight to the ground. Hold for 10 seconds and repeat with your left foot and hand.

# Taking the First Step

Walking right is very important.

- Walk with your chin up and your shoulders held slightly back.
- Walk so that the heel of your foot touches the ground first. Roll your weight forward.
- Walk with your toes pointed forward.
- Swing your arms as you walk.

## A sample walking program

Warm Up Time	Fast Walk Time	Cool Down Time	Total Time
WEEK 1			
Walk slowly 5 min.	Walk briskly 5 min.	Walk slowly 5 min.	15 min.
WEEK 2			
Walk slowly 5 min.	Walk briskly 8 min.	Walk slowly 5 min.	18 min.
WEEK 3			
Walk slowly 5 min.	Walk briskly 11 min.	Walk slowly 5 min.	21 min.
WEEK 4			
Walk slowly 5 min.	Walk briskly 14 min.	Walk slowly 5 min.	24 min.
WEEK 5			
Walk slowly 5 min.	Walk briskly 17 min.	Walk slowly 5 min.	27 min.
WEEK 6			
Walk slowly 5 min.	Walk briskly 20 min.	Walk slowly 5 min.	30 min.
WEEK 7			
Walk slowly 5 min.	Walk briskly 23 min.	Walk slowly 5 min.	33 min.
WEEK 8			
Walk slowly 5 min.	Walk briskly 26 min.	Walk slowly 5 min.	36 min.
WEEK 9 & BEYOND			
Walk slowly 5 min.	Walk briskly 30 min.	Walk slowly 5 min.	40 min.

If you walk less than three times per week, increase the fast walk time more slowly.

# Walking



## ... A Step in the Right Direction

Call  
1-877-946-4627  
for more information



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